

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

- 1-22. (canceled)
23. (currently amended) A method of compressing and packaging a single unused ~~disposable diaper~~sanitary absorbent article, the method comprising:
- (a) compressing a single unused diaper to reduce a size of the diaper, whereby the diaper exists in a compressed state;
 - (b) disposing or locating the single unused diaper while in the compressed state~~sanitary absorbent article~~ within a package, the package comprising a heat shrinkable material;
 - (c**b**) drawing a vacuum within an interior of the package such that, when exposed to atmospheric pressure, portions of the package will collapse toward and compress the ~~diaper~~absorbent article;
 - (d**e**) heating the package to shrink wrap the heat shrinkable material about the ~~diaper~~absorbent article; and
 - (e**d**) sealing the package to maintain the vacuum within the interior of the package.
24. (canceled)
25. (currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein said step (d**e**) is performed prior to said step (e**d**).
26. (currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein said step (e**d**) is performed prior to said step (d**e**).

27. (currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein said step ~~(cd)~~ is performed during performance of said step ~~(de)~~.
28. (currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the package ~~is formed from~~ comprises a tubular sheet of material having an endless wall.
29. (currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the package ~~is formed from~~ separate ~~comprises separate~~ flat panels of material which are sealed in said step (e) to form the airtight interior space of the package.
30. (canceled)
31. (previously presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said step (b) comprises drawing a vacuum at a pressure of about 350 millibars.
32. (currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein ~~a volume~~ the volume of the absorbent article is reduced by the method by about 30% to about 70%.

Claims 33-35 are canceled.

36. (withdrawn) A packaged diaper for a child produced by the method of claim 23.
37. (withdrawn) A packaged diaper for an adult produced by the method of claim 23.
38. (withdrawn) A method of packaging an absorbent article, the method comprising:
- (a) disposing an absorbent article within an interior volume defined by a heat-shrinkable material; and
 - (b) heating the heat-shrinkable material thereby shrinking the heat-shrinkable material about the absorbent article;
 - (c) wherein the absorbent article is the only absorbent article disposed within the interior volume defined by the heat shrinkable material;

- (d) wherein the absorbent article is unsoiled;
 - (e) wherein the absorbent article, prior to packaging, has an uncompressed state; and
 - (f) wherein the absorbent article, after said step (b), has a compressed state that has a lesser volume than that of the uncompressed state.
39. (withdrawn) The method of claim 38, wherein said step (b) comprises heating the heat-shrinkable material thereby shrinking the heat-shrinkable material about the absorbent article and reducing the volume of the absorbent article to the compressed state.
40. (withdrawn) The method of claim 38, further comprising compressing the absorbent article from the uncompressed state prior to said step (a).
41. (withdrawn) The method of claim 38, wherein said step (a) comprises disposing the absorbent article in the compressed state within the interior volume defined by the heat-shrinkable material.
42. (withdrawn) The method of claim 41, wherein said step (b) comprises heating the heat-shrinkable material thereby shrinking the heat-shrinkable material about the absorbent article and retaining the absorbent article in the compressed state.
43. (withdrawn) A packaged diaper for a child produced by the method of claim 38.
44. (withdrawn) A packaged diaper for an adult produced by the method of claim 38.